

Remarks

Claims 1-3 are pending. Reconsideration and allowance are requested in view of the following remarks.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) as allegedly failing to show an "output driver." Applicant respectfully disagrees and submits that an output driver in the form of a standard inverter 4 is clearly shown in FIG. 1. Although the standard inverter 4 is shown in a simplified form (e.g., without a specific input) in FIG. 1, one of ordinary skill in the art would nevertheless clearly understand the function of the output driver provided by inverter 4 within an integrated circuit. Applicant further submits that the Examiner is completely incorrect in stating that the "circuit 4 is not an output driver." On the contrary, one of ordinary skill in the art would immediately recognize that the inverter circuit 4 is acting as an output driver in the circuit 1 of FIG. 1.

The disclosure is objected to for several informalities, and claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first and second paragraphs. The Examiner alleges that "element 4 cannot be a standard inverter." This is incorrect. As known to one of ordinary skill in the art, an inverter is a circuit that provides an output that is the complement of its input.

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As can be readily seen from FIG. 1, inverter 4 does indeed provide this function. Regarding the "core region" and the "periphery region," Applicant submits that these features are clearly described in the specification and are illustrated in FIG. 1 as regions 2 and 3, respectively. Further, one of ordinary skill in the art would readily understand the meaning/operation of these regions. Regarding the Vddq and Vssq contacts, these contacts are clearly described in the specification (see, e.g., page 2, line 21 to page 3, line 18) and are illustrated by reference numerals 5 and 6, respectively, in FIG. 1. Regarding the phrase "without substrate contacts," Applicant submits that one of ordinary skill in the art would clearly understand that components of an integrated circuit can be formed on a semiconductor substrate without directly "contacting" the substrate. Regarding the "output driver," Applicant has addressed this issue above in response to the objections to the drawings.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) by So (US 6,028,465). Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Asprey et al. (US 5,193,200), hereafter "Asprey." Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) over Bridgewater, Jr. (US 6,307,401), hereafter "Bridgewater." Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 102(e) by Schell et al. (US

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6,642,768), hereafter "Schell." These rejections are defective because So, Asprey, Bridgewater, and Schell fail to disclose each and every feature of the claims as required by 35 U.S.C. 102. It should also be noted that Schell is not a valid reference under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) because the present patent application has an effective filing date of November 2, 2000, which is earlier than Schell's filing date of April 4, 2001.

Regarding claim 1, all of the cited references fail to disclose a "core region with a Vssc contact and a periphery region provided with at least one Vssq contact, characterized in that a resistance with a value lying between 100 and 300 ohms is provided between each Vssq contact and the Vssc contact." Nothing found in any of the cited references recites or suggests an IC with a core region with a Vssc contact and a periphery region with a Vssq contact where a resistance between 100 and 300 ohms is provided between each Vssq contact and Vssc contact. Thus, claim 1 is believed patentable over the cited references for at least these reasons.

Claims 2-3 depend from independent Claim 1 discussed above and are believed patentable for at least the same reasons.

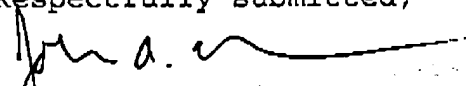
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In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

If the Examiner believes that anything further is necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Dated: 10/7/04

Respectfully submitted,


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